Sirhan, Closely Guarded, Begins 2nd Week of Trial

Still Trying to Change Jury Prospect List

By GEORGE ZUCKER

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, surrounded by super security, starts the second week of his trial Monday with a renewed effort to change the list of prospective jurors.

Close on the heels of that effort is expected to come selection of the 12 persons and as many as six alternates who will determine the fate of the 24-year-old Jordanian charged with murdering Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

When the trial recessed Thursday, one of three defense attorneys, Grant B. Cooper, said Sirhan, his defenders and the prosecution would retire to Judge Herbert V. Walker's chambers the moment it resumes.

Behind closed doors the defenders will present evidence gathered over the weekend to show that the present list of prospective jurors should be set aside, Cooper said.

He said this evidence will be taken from transcripts of the case of a teacher accused of playing a part in a walkout last year at a predominantly Mexican-American high school in Los Angeles.

UNSUCCESSFUL

The teacher's lawyers sought to have his indictment quashed on grounds it was returned by a grand jury that did not include Mexican-Americans. The move was unsuccessful.

But Sirhan's attorneys see similarity between the teacher's defense and their argument that the list of prospective jurors for Sirhan's trial should be thrown out because it does not represent a cross section of the community.

The defense has said both the list of prospective jurors and the grand jury that indicted Sirhan excluded many professionals such as legislators, steneographers, professors, ministers and doctors.

Once the judge rules on whether a new list of prospective jurors should be used, the actual selecting of the jurors will begin.

MONTHS, PROBABLY

The dozen chosen and their alternates will spend the duration of the trial — probably several months — confined to hotel rooms away from their families, except on weekends, and shielded from newspaper and broadcast accounts of the case.

During part of the selecting process, they will be questioned individually in the judge's chambers about any opinions they might have from news stories, or even from their friends.

Meanwhile, Sirhan waits and watches, surrounded by a sea of security.

Sirhan reportedly resents stories saying he isn't legally an American.

A writer, Robert B. Kaiser, says in a report for the Jan. 17 issue of Life magazine that Sirhan was angered by an article written by William F. Buckley called "The Politics of Assassination." Buckley said Sirhan "was clearly a Jordanian citizen. His loyalties were clearly to Jordan."

Kaiser says Sirhan told him: "I feel like an American. If I went back to Jordan I would be a foreigner."

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